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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[*The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.*]

EDITOR AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING: To the members of the "Nurses Associated Alumnae" who are to be entertained by the "Nurses of Virginia" on a trip down the James River to Norfolk, and the Jamestown Exposition.

We, the undersigned nurses of Norfolk and Portsmouth extend to you a hearty invitation to write to us, and avail yourselves of any information that we can give you in regard to securing accommodation during your stay in this vicinity.

As many of the members of the committee as possible will attend the convention, and, will meet the boat on its arrival in Norfolk.

We will also be prepared to act as guides to hotels, etc., or give any necessary information. Miss M. M. Martin, 167 Botetout St., Norfolk, Va.; Miss Christine M. Campbell, 409 Waverly Boulevard, Portsmouth, Va.; Miss Newton, Supt. Sara Leigh Hospital, Mowbray Arch, Norfolk; Miss Moss, Supt. Kings Daughters Hospital, Portsmouth, Va.; Miss Nason, Kings Daughters Nurse, Norfolk, Virginia; Miss Reta Fitzhugh, Court St., Portsmouth, Va.; Miss Eakins, Supt. St. Christophers Hospital, Freemason St., Norfolk, Va.; Miss Katherine Gilbert, St. Vincents Hospital; Miss Millechamp, Sarah Leigh Hospital, Norfolk, Va.; Miss McGoldrick, Norfolk Eye and Ear Sanitorium, Granby St., Norfolk; Miss Brickhouse, Protestant Hospital, Norfolk, Va.; Miss Lily Walker, Protestant Hospital, Norfolk, Va.; Miss Countesse Seawell, Bute St., Norfolk, Va.; chairman of committee, Mrs. S. T. Hanger, 7 Waverley Boulevard, Portsmouth, Va.

THE THREE YEARS' COURSE

DEAR EDITOR: I have just read and enjoyed the "Editorial Comment" in the April number. I think that a three years' course in hospital work is best, and I may add that I believe the "training-days" in a hospital are the happiest nursing days. The small sum paid to nurses is very helpful, and I know many nurses who never would have trained had they not had that small salary, for they were able to make

it cover all expenses, of uniforms, as well as personal expenses. I think there would be more probationers were the salary still paid by the hospitals.

Sometimes I think that we are running too much to "education," and as I have heard nurses express it, the elevating of our profession. Discipline and work in the wards of a hospital are beyond criticism, the greatest training, I believe, in the world. Some book learning is, I know, necessary. But there is a strenuous tone in everything at present, we get a habit of taking things too seriously. I really think it would do us good to take stock and see where we are, and what wonderful work has been done and is being done towards the successful training of nurses. I should like to see more time given to making the lives of the nurses pleasanter, also what is being done for sick and tired nurses, and for those in the large cities who have fallen in the struggle and have gone to the wall. I have for a long time felt that there is a great and terrible responsibility among us for one another.

The training-school like all schools but begins our education and life, therefore, a high moral tone should prevail. Nurses should learn all through their training to watch themselves lest they be careless. Carelessness so soon becomes coarseness, and so lowers the tone of their work.

Sometimes I think the test of a nurse's life is so hard, the demands sometimes too great, that the nurse either stands or falls. Falls come often from failure of physical strength, too. A little of a drug so easily gives rest and forgetfulness,—*too easily*. The temptations of a nurse's life are terrible. Only those who have been lonely and overtired know. But the nurse who comes through it all is *pure gold*.

ANNIE VANBUSKIRK,
Graduate Montreal General Hospital.

DEAR EDITOR: Apropos of "An Open Question," having been connected, for years, with a large training-school that offers a three years' course, I cannot resist giving my experience.

The change, from a two to a three years' course, was made after my training was completed, but as a graduate head nurse I had all the advantages personally, and ample opportunity to study the effect upon the pupil nurse. The result of the broader training in theory and practice was most satisfactory.

Upon graduation nurses are better qualified for all lines of work. The majority discover the special line of nursing to which they are best

adapted and since the trend of the times is to specialize, this is a great advantage to them and to the public.

Among a large acquaintance, I know no *good* nurse who does not appreciate to its full value the three years' course and who would not consider a return to the old system a retrogression.

Just a word of appreciation for the body of able women who have borne (and are still bearing) the brunt of this, as well as all, the great advance movements.

It seems in this warfare for the highest and best in our profession that no fort is ever taken but that there is constant battle ever after to keep it. There is a great army of nurses who cannot "Blaze New Trails" but can follow closely those who do.

Even those among us who are almost Oslerized, have hearts that are fresh and full of enthusiasm and welcome with open arms all changes in our own school and our profession that are along the lines of progression.

J. C. B., R.N.

TIME TO SPEAK

"In Mrs. Kinney's letter in the February JOURNAL she has thrown down the gauntlet to the nurses who feel so strongly that the present status of army nurses is intolerable."

"Has not the time arrived for those women who know whereof they speak to express themselves? Is it entirely the question of ranking with the common soldier, which certainly is distasteful enough, or some equally important reason?"—AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING, March, 1907.

A certain doctor, in a recent address to his colleagues, made some remarks which so admirably apply to the attitude of nurses who are or have been members of the Army Nurse Corps that I venture to quote him. He says:

"There is need to arouse our professional conscience," as well as "to inform our professional intelligence with regard to this subject."

* * * "In the present confused situation the danger is not from open and avowed enemies, but from ignorance and treason in our own ranks"—I should like also to add incidentally one more source of peril, *i.e.*, "our friends!"

It is indeed time to have done with covert sneers—with feints at parry and thrust—stabbing in the back,—and to come out into the open. It is just, neither to the Army Nurse Corps nor to the nurses at large